

HOW THEY CONQUERED THE DRAGON

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A SERMON
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BY C. H. SPURGEON,
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

*"They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word
of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death."
Revelation 12:11.*

IT is not my main object, at this time, to expound the chapter before us. I scarcely consider myself qualified to explain any part of the Book of Revelation and none of the expositions I have ever seen entice me to attempt the task, for they are mostly occupied with a refutation of all the interpretations which have gone before—and each one seems to be very successful, indeed, in proving that all the rest know nothing at all about the matter. The sum total of substantial instruction in nearly all the comments upon Revelation amounts to this—that our heavenly Father has said in His Word some mysterious things which few of His children can yet comprehend. This is just what we might have expected when the infinite God speaks to finite men. It is, no doubt, intended to humble us and draw forth our reverent adoration. Happily there is a blessing to those who read and hear and keep the words of His prophecy, for had that blessing been confined to those who understand it, few would have obtained the benediction. The Revelation is a most blessed book, but its unfolding has yet to be accomplished. If you refer to the expositors you will find that they discover, in this passage, the dragon-ensign of pagan Rome and its removal from its position by Constantine, who set up the cross in its stead. I do not believe the Lord took any more interest in Constantine than in any other sinner and it seems to me little short of blasphemous to say that he was the man-child who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron and was caught up into God and to His throne. His adoption of Christianity as the state religion was not a thing for glorified spirits to rejoice in, but a dreadful calamity, fitted only to make sport for Pandemonium. No one ever did the church a worse turn than he who first joined her to the state. The act was a piece of state policy and kingcraft and no more—a business utterly unworthy of record by an inspired pen.

It would be unprofitable to follow great interpreters through the history of the Roman empire, all of which they find in the visions of John—such an exercise would be more suitable to another day and would rather come under the head of history than theology. I can only give you what it occurs to me that you and I would have understood by the vision if it had been granted to us. It does not appear to me to be a portion of a consecutive revelation, but a sort of summary of the visions which follow it and in some respects, a preface to them. Remember that it is a vision and is not to be interpreted in cold blood, word by word, or read as if its coherence and connection would always be apparent. In this chapter we may see, as in a panorama, the entire conflict between the principles of good and evil, between God and Satan. We have before us the old original quarrel between the woman and the serpent with which the inspired volume commences, and a clear development of the first promise, "I will put enmity between you and the woman, between your seed and her seed."

Woman, in her innocence, was attacked by "that old serpent called the devil, and Satan," and she readily enough fell a prey to his deceptions, to the utter ruin of our race. At the end of that first crafty assault and speedy victory, the dragon met with his rebuff in words like these—"The seed of the woman shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel," a promise which declared that, though the woman's seed must suffer greatly at Satan's hand in consequence of sin, yet He would conquer in the end and destroy the power of evil. In the Revelation, the scene is changed from Eden to the heavens and there before you stand, again, the woman and the serpent in the same position of antagonism as before, the serpent still the assailant, only this time more openly so. Observe how both woman and serpent have developed—the one has become a queen bedecked with celestial splendor, and the other a python with a tail so vast that he threatens to obliterate the stars with every sweep of it. The woman is no longer a simple, childlike personage, but *a wonder*. She walks not among the trees and the flowers, but amid the orbs

of heaven. She is clothed with the sun, the moon is under her feet, and upon her head is a coronet of 12 stars. In her you see the great cause of truth and righteousness embodied—she is, in fact, the church of God in all ages, the woman whose seed blesses all the nations of the earth. The glorious cause of holiness and God, incarnated in the church, is clothed with the splendor of light, and truth, and majesty. We will not stay to explain the details of the gorgeous imagery, for in such a matter it is almost frivolity to go into detail. The church has her greater and her lesser lights—she is covered with the underived splendor of indwelling Deity, and her walk is bright with the reflected glory of holiness—while her crown of joy is found in her complete ministry as represented by the apostolic twelve. She is fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners. Behold, then, the typical woman, and see how glorious is the cause of truth and holiness.

In the vision the queenly woman is about to bring forth the promised seed. She cries in her anguish, “travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered.” This, of course, may represent the church crying day and night unto God in times gone by for the coming of the promised deliverer—a cry which increased in intensity and agony of desire as the time drew on. But it may also depict the constant condition of a true church—always travailing in birth till Christ is formed in the hearts of men. Till the man-child, namely, Christ mystical, is born here below; till the Christ is so brought forth among the sons of men that He and all those who by grace, are enabled to overcome the wicked one, shall rule the nations with a rod of iron. (Rev 2:26, 27).

You see, then, in vision the woman, the church, and before her stands another wonder—the serpent mightily developed. He is called a great red dragon—huge in bulk and terrible in appearance is this emblem of evil, and he is clothed with the horrible splendor peculiar to himself—the splendor of deadly hate and imperious rebellion. Bright and burning, like flames of fire, the huge serpent is terrible to gaze upon. The python is red with wrath, and encrimsoned with persecuting malice. Red is the color of Edom, the adversary of the Lord and of His Israel—and it is still the chosen color of the monstrous power of antichrist which holds its court at Rome. What is the last of its evil gifts to our own country but a red hat for its arch-priest? This great red dragon is full of craft, for it has seven heads. One Satanic head were enough, but our great enemy possesses an almost perfect ingenuity of wickedness. He uses a wisdom all but infinite to effect the overthrow of the church of God and the destruction of Christ and the rest of the heaven-born seed among men! These seven heads are supplemented by 10 horns, the emblems of power, for the prince of the power of the air is by no means weak. He has, in fact, more power than wisdom, having but seven heads to ten horns and yet according to the order of nature, each head should have two horns, we may also say that he has not power enough to execute all that his wicked cunning enables him to invent. By the power wielded by the dragon, he leads men to rebel against the law of the Lord, and induces them to persecute the church. The power of evil is great in all lands, and as opposed to a defenseless woman in a sorrowful condition, it seems quite impossible that she should stand against it. The heads are also crowned, for Satan sways with more than regal power the minds of men—he is the god of this world—it lies in the wicked one. He delights to display that power and trusts much to outward pomp, therefore he wears seven crowns upon his seven heads, as if one diadem were not sufficient to denote his kingship. His enormous energy is also set forth by his lashing the skies in his fury and tearing down a third part of the stars—it is evermore his ambition to deepen darkness and destroy light—and terribly successful has he been in this, his choicest pastime.

See, then, before you, the woman in her brightness and loveliness, and the dragon in his rage and power. The dragon is watching for the expected birth. He is eager to devour the man-child as soon as it is born—the ideal man, the offspring of the divine life—he longs to destroy. It was so when our Lord Jesus was born—Satan stirred up Herod to seek the young child and therefore, the massacre of the innocents. But the dragon was foiled—Jesus lived till His hour was come—and then He was caught up unto God and to His throne. Thus also Satan strove to devour the new-born seed, when the converts to Christ were few, and His mystical body upon earth was like unto that of a little child. He persecuted the man-child when first the gospel was preached, but the more his servants persecuted the saints, the more they multiplied. The method followed by Pharaoh in Egypt was a crafty one, but it did not and could not succeed. Persecution always fails.

Today, brethren, the man-child, even our Lord Jesus, is caught up unto God and sits upon His throne and in part, also, the mystical body of Christ is there, far beyond the reach of the dragon. Jesus reigns

with His saints in a region in which there is no more place for the dragon, a domain from which he is forever cast out into the earth. All the power which Satan ever had in heavenly things is now ended by the finished work of our ascended Lord—

*“Bruised is the serpent’s head
Hell is vanquished, death is dead
And to Christ gone up on high
Captive is captivity.”*

By reason of our sin and his own power over death, Satan shut heaven against us, but now the battle in the higher regions between the dragon and the woman’s seed is over and we are in the heavenly places and Satan banished forever. There is no condemnation unto us any more, nor a foot for the evil one to stand upon, now that we are in Christ. When we read here, “heaven,” do not understand, by it, the place of the blessed, where God dwells, but the spiritual region, the realm of spiritual things. The first fight between truth and error lies in purely spiritual matters, in those heavenly places into which Christ has lifted up His church. It is a wrestling between good and evil spirits and not a contention with flesh and blood. We find angels first entering into this strife. We know but little about it, but it would seem that the great dragon of evil has made war with angels as well as with men. Milton sang of those angelic conflicts in majestic verse, but Milton was not inspired to speak infallibly, and we must take heed not to confuse poets with prophets. It is clear that good and evil spirits are at necessary variance one with another and it is also clear that in ages gone by Satan tempted the angelic band. And those angels which kept the first estate were victorious over him once and for all. They rejected his sinful solicitations and now he has no more power over them. Never again can he tempt them—they shall stand fast forever—confirmed in their blessed estate. Michael and his angels have defeated the devil and his angels in one decisive battle and by remaining true to their allegiance have chased away from angelic realms the invading power of evil.

Dwelling in the spirit realms, there are others besides angels, our brethren who have left the body, the saints of ancient times and the faithful of the early church. These, also, dwell in a region out of which Satan is expelled. He cannot molest them anymore. The text bids us hear the glorified chanting of the song of victory over Satan, forever cast down from the realms of the blessed and never again to enter into the spiritual domain to vex them. “And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of God, and the power of His Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night.” To the singers of this song I want to call your attention and mainly to one point concerning them. They have conquered Satan. I want you to observe this and to note the weapons by which they overcame.

Leaving all the rest, we will pay our attention to the victors and the weapons by which they won the day. First, we shall notice that *the blessed ones before the throne were all warriors and victors*. Secondly, *they all fought with the same weapons*. And thirdly, *they all fought the same spirit*.

I. First, ALL THE BLESSED ONES WHO ARE REJOICING IN HEAVEN WERE ONCE WARRIORS AND VICTORS HERE BELOW. It is a very simple truth to mention, but we need to be reminded of it—

*“Once they were a mourning liege below,
And wet their couch with tears;
They wrestled hard, as we do now,
With sins and doubts and fears.”*

We, too, often think of the saints that have gone before as if they were men of another race from ourselves, capable of nobler things, endowed with graces which we cannot reach, and adorned with holiness impossible to us. The medieval artists were apt to paint the saints with rings of glory about their heads. But, indeed, they had no such halos. Their brows were furrowed with care, even as ours and their hair grew gray with grief. Their light was within and we may have it. Their glory was by grace and the same grace is available for us. They were men of like passions with ourselves, “our brethren,” though a little elder born. It is clear from our text that every one of the saints in heaven was *assailed* by Satan. How could there be a victory without a battle? They were all attacked by one or other of the dragon’s heads and horns. When you suffer from a fearful temptation which almost staggers you, count it no strange thing. Be not dismayed as though a new temptation had befallen you. That fiery dart had been aimed at other men’s hearts before it was caught upon your shield. If the insinuation should happen to be profane

and blasphemous to a very high degree, so that you condemn yourself and say, “No other human mind could ever have been defiled with so foul a suggestion as this,” do not despond, for such suggestions have been injected into the minds of the purest, even as the worst of thieves may seek to enter the house of the most honest man in the city. Even to those who, at this moment, are without fault before the throne of God, it happened while here below that horrible temptations assailed them. Satan always has been, since his fall, a tempter of the worst order—and ever since he first beguiled our mother, Eve—he has gone on to ensnare men’s souls with the same craft, the same cruelty, the same falsehood, and the same impiety against the Lord. It will help you, if you reflect that you are not alone, and the pathway which you follow was trod by the most honored of the elect of God. Paul, who won provinces for Christ, nevertheless, had his messengers of Satan to buffet him, and had to stand against doubts and fears insinuated by the old serpent, even as you must stand. If you could have examined the celestial victors, one by one, as they entered within the pearly gates, you would have found them all covered with scars—though they now bear neither spot, nor wrinkle, nor any such thing, they had, all of them, in the day of their flesh, to feel the cruel tooth and fang of that infernal serpent. Not one of them traversed a clear course and took his throne unchallenged—and neither will you conquer without conflict. For you, also, if there is no cross, there will be no crown. Therefore, be not astonished if you are attacked in all ways.

The glorified, in addition to having been attacked, were led to *resist* the evil one, for nobody overcomes an antagonist without fighting with him. There must be, in order for a real battle, two sides of the question. But I feel sure there are some professors who know much about being tempted, but they do not know much about resisting. Now, brethren, however great our temptation, our resistance must be greater. To be tempted is common, even to the worst and most reprobate of men—but to resist temptation is the mark of the child of God. The verse I quoted just now says—

*“They wrestled hard, as we do now
With sins and doubts and fears.”*

It is not merely that they had “sins and doubts and fears,” these all may have, but they “wrestled hard” with them. They would not be put down by them. They would not yield an inch—they stood upon their guard until they drove the sword of the Spirit through the very heart of the foe. “They resisted unto blood, striving against sin.” Rest assured, dear friends, that sin will never be conquered without resistance. And if we fold our arms and suppose that we shall get the victory by believing that we have it, we shall be mightily mistaken. We must watch, and pray, and strive, and agonize, and press forward—“This kind goes not out but by prayer and fasting.” Salvation is not by works, but conquest over sin involves fighting from day to day. Victory will not come to us while we lie passive. We must be stirred up with all the energy of the eternal Spirit to vanquish evil. These Canaanites must be driven out of the land by force of arms before we can take full possession of our inheritance. Let this, then, be our plea to our great Joshua as we gird on our harness and unsheathe our swords—

*“Almighty King of saints,
These tyrant lusts subdue;
Drive the old dragon from his throne,
And all his hellish crew.”*

We find that these warriors all *overcame*, for heaven is not for those who merely fight, but for those who overcome. “He that overcomes shall inherit all things.” “I fight against my sin,” says one. Brother, do you overcome it? Did it seem a hard question just now when I said, do you resist? It is a harder question which I now put, “Do you overcome?” For if sin overcomes you—if as a habitual matter of fact sin is your master—then you have yet to know what true religion is. For of the saints, it is said, “Sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under the law, but under grace.” There is a groaning and a crying which is common to the saints. “O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?” is not an experience of an hour, never to be repeated—it runs, more or less, throughout the whole of life. But remember that it is also attended with hopeful confidence in the power of divine grace, for the apostle goes on to say, “I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord.” The believer feels the battle, but he also rejoices in the victory. He wrestles and conquers at the same time. I wish that some of our brethren could see how possible this is. We are victorious, though not without a conflict. Our victory is gained and we are more than conquerors, but still we march on to new conflicts and never lay aside our swords. The Christian’s position is very much like that of Napoleon, who used to say, “Conquest has

made me what I am, and conquest must maintain me.” And so with you, Christian—you have conquered through Jesus Christ, but you have to conquer, still, and go on as He did—“conquering and to conquer.” All this by the power of the Holy Spirit. What if today I have been enabled by grace to overcome some besetting sin? Before an hour is over I may find another sin stirring within my bosom and I must not yield to it—I am bound to conquer each temptation as it assails me. If I overcome Satan by the blood of the Lamb, I am a Christian, but not else, for if any sin permanently overcomes me, I cannot enter heaven. If I overcome one sin by the power of the Holy Spirit, I must still be looking out to wrestle with others, for between here and heaven I may never accept a truce, or hope for a cessation of hostilities. Never may the Christian take off his harness, never say to himself, “The battle is fought and the victory is won, and I have nothing more to do.” You are enlisted, brethren, in a lifelong fight. When you shall lie down in your grave, then may it be said, “The battle is over.” But as long as you are here, you will be within gunshot of the enemy, and it is just possible your sharpest conflict will be upon your dying bed, even as John Knox, after conquering the devil in all ways and shapes, waged as he lay a-dying, the sternest struggle of his entire life. Even thus it may be with you, but you are bound to overcome. Attack, resistance, and victory must be yours.

So, then, in heaven they all *rejoice* because they have overcome, for the next verse to our text puts it, “Therefore rejoice, you heavens, and you that dwell in them.” It is a theme for gladness in heaven that they did fight and resist and overcome. Those white robes mean victories and so do those palms. But there could not have been victories if there had never been conflicts. There is joy among the angels, for they had their conflict when they stood firm against temptation and did not swerve when the dragon’s tail swept away a third part of the stars of heaven. But ours will be a victory peculiarly sweet, a song especially melodious, because our battle has been peculiarly severe. We fell, we rose again, we were kept, upheld, sustained, and enabled to overcome at last, and therefore, we will rejoice forever before the throne of God.

I leave this point, but I would like you to make a personal application—Are you resisting? Are you conquering? Does the life of God in you get the upper hand of sin? Do not let us deceive ourselves. If sin is our master, we shall perish. Grace must reign in us or we are in a wretched condition. Do not let us look upon victory over sin as a luxury to be enjoyed by the higher life people—it is a condition into which we must all enter or we are not saved. Holiness is not a luxury for the few. It is a necessity for all saints. And what is preached as an accomplishment which may be obtained by a second conversion is, in truth, a necessary part of the first conversion, if it is of the Lord. The slaves of sin are not the children of God. If sin reigns in your mortal bodies, you are dead in it. If Satan has dominion over you, you are not in Christ Jesus, for, “They that are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.” Wherever grace lives, it either reigns or fights for the throne—it enters the soul on purpose to war with evil and overthrow it. Where the ark of the Lord is, Dagon must fall upon his face and be broken. “He that sins has not seen Him, neither known Him,” says the apostle John, and he says truly. “That which is born of God overcomes the world,” and if you let the world get the mastery, you cannot be born of God. Thus, I leave the point, hoping that we may endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ and receive a crown of life at the last.

II. Now, secondly, **THE VICTORS ALL FOUGHT WITH THE SAME WEAPONS.** They had two weapons and these two were one—the blood and the Word. “They overcame him through the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony.” First, *the blood of the Lamb*—it was theirs. The blood of the Lamb will not help us until it becomes our own. They went to Jesus by faith and received the atonement. The cleansing blood was sprinkled on them—it spoke peace in their consciences, it took away their sin—they were washed in it, they were made white as the driven snow. “The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.” They were afar off, and “They were made near by the blood of Christ.” This blood continued to give them access to God, for it gave them boldness to draw near unto the throne of grace. In fact, this blood was so theirs that it was the life of their spirit. It was a generous wine to them and became the highest joy of their souls. Brethren, if you and I are ever to be among these victors, the blood must be our own, appropriated by faith. How is it with you this morning? Has the blood cleansed you, my brother, my sister? Does the blood dwell in you as your life? Has the blood of the Lamb given you fellowship with God and brought you near? If so, you are on the way to overcoming by the blood.

The blood of the Lamb, according to the verse which precedes the text, had given them all they needed, for it gave them *salvation*. They were saved, completely saved. Jesus Christ, when they laid hold upon Him and felt the power of His blood, redeemed them from all iniquity and translated them from the kingdom of Satan. Then they received *strength*—note that word. They had been dead, but they obtained life. They had been weak, and they were made strong in the Lord, for he who knows the power of the blood of Jesus is made strong to do great exploits. Then they obtained the *kingdom*, for the kingdom comes to us by the way of the conquering blood of Jesus, and He has made us kings and priests unto God because He was slain. We are told, also, that they had *power*, or authority. Our Lord, who has risen from the dead, clothed all His disciples with authority when He said, “All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth. Go you, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them.” Beloved, if we have participated in the blood of Jesus Christ, I hope we feel it to be all these four things to us—salvation from sin, strength out of weakness, a kingdom in fellowship with Christ, and authority to speak in His name. It is the blood of the covenant and it secures all the covenant gifts of God to us. It is the life of our life, the all in all of all that we possess. So, then, they had the blood of the Lamb and they possessed the privileges which the blood brings with it.

But the gist of the text lies in the fact that they fought with the dragon by means of the blood of the Lamb and overcame with it. How did they do that? It is easy to discover. They overcame Satan’s *terrors* with the blood of atonement. Satan is the great red dragon, a hideous seven-headed python, horrible to look upon, horned like the serpent called the Egyptian Cerastes. Man dreads the serpent race, but would dread more a monster so dire as this, so full of poison, so red with fury. The conflict appears to be unequal enough between this horrid monstrosity and the seed of a timid woman. Yet when we are sprinkled with the blood of Jesus, we are invulnerable and fear not the dragon, for we remember the promise which says, “You shall tread upon the lion and the adder.” When the atonement brings peace to our hearts, the great dragon dwindles down to a mere snake with a broken head, of which it is written, “Upon your belly you shall go and dust shall you eat.” We can see the heel mark of Christ upon his broken head and what is more, we expect to set our own heel there, for we are told that the Lord will bruise Satan under our feet shortly. I reckon upon the tune when the Lord will bruise him under my feet—it shall be as heavy a bruise as I can give him, I guarantee you. He has tempted and tried us all so much that the victory we shall gain will be one which will bring to Jesus much renown. And we will not fail to sing His praises as long as we have any being. Thus our fear of Satan ceases when we see that Christ has redeemed us from the curse and put Satan as an enemy under our feet. Our hearts exult in Your presence, O destroyer of the devil and his works, and we triumph in You—

*“When we behold death, hell, and sin,
Vanquished by that dear blood of Yours,
And see the man that groaned and died
Sit glorious by His Father’s side.”*

By the blood of the Lamb, we overcome Satan as the *accuser of the brethren*. The chapter expressly tells us that he accuses the brethren day and night. There is an instructive tradition among the Jews that Satan accuses the elect of God all day and all night long, except on the Day of Atonement, and then he is quiet. Glory be to the dying Lamb, the atonement shuts the mouth of the lion continually, for the atonement lasts all the year round. Neither in the court of heaven, nor in the court of conscience can the enemy’s accusations harm us, for the blood of our Substitute is a bar to all suits against us. If we, by faith, are assured that Jesus has put away our sin, what cause have we for alarm? If the punishment due to our sin and the sin itself have both been carried away by our great Surety, so that sin is plunged into the depths of the sea and cast behind God’s back, then who is he that shall harm us? Brethren, do but grasp the doctrine of the atonement, and know your own interest in it, and the accuser of the brethren will be silenced by the voice of the blood.

We overcome Satan by the same means as to his *craft*. He has seven heads, but we tell him Jesus died and that breaks all the seven heads and destroys the sevenfold ingenuity of his snares. He would, if it were possible, deceive even the very elect, but the secret of the sprinkled blood is that which prevents the elect from ever being deluded by him. Who shall separate them from the love of Christ? Does not redemption by blood hold them fast to their Redeemer? You cannot be right anywhere if you are wrong upon the atonement, but if you are sound upon the substitutionary sacrifice, there is little fear of your

falling into any serious error. As the needle once magnetized continues to seek the pole, so they who are once touched with the love of their dying Surety are sure to remember it and cannot long be turned in any other direction. As for the dragon's horns of *power*, the power of the blood is far greater. Since we have been redeemed by Christ from under the power of Satan, he cannot regain his hold of us. His power is broken. As to the *crowns* which he wears, what do we care about them? We are delivered from under his power by being redeemed by the blood of Jesus Christ, and Satan can never again have rule over us. As for the *energetic influence* which is figured by his tail, he may quench the very stars of heaven and pull down the most brilliant professors and make them fall to the earth as apostates—but he cannot harm us, because of the blood of Jesus we are protected by the power of God through faith unto salvation. Cling to the cross, dear brethren, for there you are out of the reach of the old serpent's venom. He may hiss, but he can do no more. No wave can ever wash a poor sinner off from the rock of ages. No storm can drive a penitent out of the clefts of the rock. Within the wounds of Jesus, we are secure from all the rage of Satan. In our battles with Satan, we need no other artillery but the atoning blood—it meets and conquers him at all points.

The other weapon is for use in spreading the gospel and defeating the devil in his power over our fellow men. They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and *by the word of their testimony*. Now, brethren, what is the testimony of the saints? It is their testimony concerning the blood of the Lamb. If ever we are to conquer Satan in the world, we must preach the atoning blood. Whenever the doctrine of the atonement has been obscured in the church in any measure, to that extent the power of the church has declined. But you shall find that where there is a clear declaration of justification by faith in Jesus Christ, then the church comes forth in her glory and bruises the dragon's head. Dear brethren, if you want to deliver souls from the power of Satan, you must preach the sacrifice of Jesus and its power to remove sin. Does Satan cast the chains of drunkenness about men, or uncleanness, or self-righteousness? Preach the blood of Jesus as the only way of salvation. Let them see how sin was punished in Him and how ready the Lord is to forgive them and they will arise and go unto their Father. Tell the sinner that God is able to put away his sin because Jesus died, and touched with repentance, through the teaching of the Holy Spirit, you will find the sinner break loose from dominion of the devil. If you find that same sinner trembling with despair, accused in his conscience, alarmed as at a great red dragon, you may cheer him by the old, old story of redeeming grace and dying love. The blood of Jesus is the end of despair. There is no weapon like a testimony to the cleansing blood with which to kill despondency. Tell the sinner that there is no sin that man has done but what the blood can put it away. Go to the very gates of hell with your testimony for remission by blood and you will find some welcome you upon the borders of destruction. Tell the thieves in prison and the criminals condemned to die—and the reprobates upon their deathbeds—that there is still life in a look at the Crucified One. And if you do this, you will deliver them from the hardness of heart which says, "There is no hope." If Satan deceives sinners with false hopes and causes them to trust in priestcraft and sacramentarianism, there is no way to overcome Satan in them but by the blood of Jesus. I do believe, brothers, that if the atonement of Christ had been properly preached in the churches of England some years ago, we should not, now, be pestered with this revived popery. But there has been a great deal of mystification upon the doctrine of satisfaction for sin, a great deal of keeping back of the grand doctrine of vicarious sacrifice and therefore, as men need a Savior and a Sacrifice, if you do not present them the true one, they will go off to find a false one—and they do find such a false one in the priestcraft of the Roman and Anglican churches. Keep up the preaching of the one finished sacrifice and the dragon must fly. As St. Patrick is said to have driven out all the venomous creatures from Ireland, so let Jesus Christ come and all the serpent's seed will fly before Him—they cannot bear the great truth of the atoning death of the Son of God. Lift up the cross, young man, when you stand in the corners of the streets. Whatever you do not know, know the doctrine of the atonement. Whatever you cannot tell the people, tell them about Jesus Christ, who hung upon the tree for sinners. Make Him the main theme of all your conversation. If you write tracts, if you cannot explain the apocalypse, and few of us can, explain Calvary. Dwell much upon Golgotha and Gethsemane, "For I, if I am lifted up," says Christ, "will draw all men unto Me." Keep to the cross, this is the main attraction. This is the tree whose leaves are for the healing of the nations. This is the central sun of the gospel and its light will scatter the darkness, but nothing else will do it. Israel never came out of Egypt until the blood of the Lamb was sprinkled on the lintel and the two side posts of the houses—they overcame by

the blood of the Lamb. The world of sinners redeemed will never be converted till we bring forth that grandest of all miracles, the Paschal Lamb and the blood by faith sprinkled on the door. Let us always proclaim salvation by the dying Lamb and shake the power of Satan to its foundations.

III. I must close with this last remark, that while they all fought with the same weapons **THEY ALL FOUGHT WITH THE SAME SPIRIT**, for the text says, “They loved not their lives unto the death.” My brethren, what does this mean? I wish we could reach to it and interpret it by our lives.

The expression indicates *dauntless courage*. They were never afraid of the doctrine of a bleeding Savior, nor ashamed to cry, “Behold the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world.” Let us never be ashamed of our hope. There is such a straining, in these days, after learned preaching. Such love of word-spinning and theory-inventing. But let us be fools for Christ’s sake and stick to the old gospel, having no banner for our war but the bronze serpent, lifted high, even Jesus Christ and Him crucified. Let us never yield to sneers or ridicule. Some of us have been styled the echo of the Puritans—yes, the honorable title of, “*Ultimus Puritanorum*”—the last of the Puritans, has been assigned to us. It is well. We want no higher degree, for the old theology is very dear to us. We nail our colors to the mast. The atoning blood is the very life, soul, and core of our ministry, and shall be so as long as we live.

These men, in addition to *dauntless courage*, had *unswerving fidelity*. They “loved not their lives unto the death.” They thought it better to die than to deny the faith. They could not be tempted, or led aside, by bribes and offers of emoluments. And when life, itself was put into the scale, they did not hesitate—they stuck by the cross. Brethren, I want you all to do this, to have the courage to stick to your convictions about Christ and then, the fidelity to stand forth in evil times.

More than that, they were *perfect in their consecration*. “They loved not their lives unto the death.” They gave themselves up, body, soul, and spirit, to the cause of which the precious blood is the symbol—and that consecration led them to perfect self-sacrifice. No Christian of the true type counts anything to be his own. He who really knows the power of the blood of Jesus says, “I am not my own. I am bought with a price.” And to him, to live or die, to be poor or rich, to be sick or in health, to be in honor or in shame is not a matter of choice—he is his Master’s own and has given himself up unreservedly, loving not his life even to the death. I think that this is the spirit in which to preach Christ’s gospel. Brothers, we shall never see the gospel come to the front so as to conquer the dragon till we bring it there in this spirit. When God shall raise up among us men and women who live only to prove the power of the blood of Jesus Christ, and live for nothing else—who tell out the Savior’s name and show, in their lives, what that blood has done for them, and are ready to die to glorify their Lord—then will come the times in which the song of victory shall be heard. Then shall the travailing woman have her reward. And then shall the dragon be covered with everlasting shame! May God bless you this morning by giving you to know the power of the blood for Jesus’ sake. Amen.

PORTIONS OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMON—Isaiah 51:9-16; Revelation 12.

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